

## QUERQUEDULA CIRCIA.

### Garganey.

*Anas Circia*, Linn. Syst. Nat., tom. i. p. 204.

— *Querquedula*, Linn. ibid., p. 203.

*Querquedula*, Briss. Orn., tom. vi. p. 427, pl. 39. figs. 1 & 2.

— *æstiva*, Briss. ibid., p. 445.

— *Circia*, Steph. Cont. of Shaw's Gen. Zool., vol. xii. p. 143, pl. 51.

— *circia, glaucopteros, et scapularis*, Brehm, Handb. der Naturg. aller Vög. Deutsch., pp. 881, 882, 883.

*Pterocyanea querquedula*, Bonap. Compt. Rend. de l'Acad. Sci., tom. xliii., séances des 15 et 22 Sept. 1856.

*Cyanopterus querquedula*, Blas. List of Birds of Eur., Engl. edit. p. 21.

It may be considered by some of my contemporaries that, in accordance with the views of modern systematists, I ought to have adopted the generic titles of *Nettion* and *Pterocyanea* or *Cyanoptera* for the Teal and Garganey respectively; but, while I admit the desirability of separating them from the old Linnean genus *Anas*, I do not think they differ so much from each other as to warrant their being regarded as pertaining to distinct genera; besides which I am aware that by many of my readers these minute subdivisions are considered unnecessary. I have therefore retained them both under the term *Querquedula* proposed by Stephens long anterior to those above mentioned.

All that I have said respecting the beauty and elegance of the Teal equally applies to the present bird, since, if possible, its summer dress is even more graceful than the nuptial costume of the Teal, the beautiful pencillings of its flanks, the lengthened and pointed form of its scapularies, the delicacy of its grey tints, the crescentic edgings of the feathers of its breast, and the conspicuous white superciliary mark, contrasted with the darker colouring of the surrounding parts, rendering it second to none of the *Anatidæ*. Unlike the Teal, however, this species must be regarded as a visitor to, rather than a stationary species in, our islands; although it regularly breeds, but in small numbers, in Norfolk, and perhaps some others of the eastern counties of England. The Teal, as will be seen by my account of that species, breeds with us regularly, and is far more abundant here in winter than in summer, its number, at that season, being greatly increased by accessions from distant northern countries. The Garganey or Summer Teal, on the other hand, is most abundant in spring, at which season vast numbers arrive from the southern and eastern portions of the continent. In all parts of France, Holland, Germany, Spain, and Italy it is far more numerous than in our islands; and the further we proceed in an eastward direction, the more abundant it becomes. North Africa, Persia, and India appear to be especially congenial to it; and we learn from Mr. Swinhoe that it is also an inhabitant of China and the island of Formosa. Its principal resort in our islands are the eastern and southern counties, or those which are directly opposite to the shores of the Continent. In the month of May it may be looked for on the coasts of Suffolk, Norfolk, and Lincolnshire, whence many are annually sent to the London markets for natural-history purposes or for the table. In Scotland and in Ireland it is far less numerous than with us, and is even less abundant in the latter country than in the former.

Mr. Rodd states that it is a rare visitant to Cornwall; but, a few summers since, several were obtained in the neighbourhood of Penzance in very beautiful plumage. Its occurrence in Wales is also said to be rare, as it is along the western coast generally.

The Rev. R. Lubbock informs us that this elegant little Duck breeds sometimes in Norfolk, and that "broods are often found upon the broads in July and August. They generally appear in March, whence their name of Summer Teal. I have seen the immature bird in August; on comparing it with two young Teal, killed on the same day, it was easily distinguished by the greater length of its neck, more slender habit in general, and the lighter colour of the plumage. A friend received a pair alive, in March 1822, from the Winterton decoy, the female of which deposited an egg in the basket during her journey. The Garganey is very rarely seen in severe weather; indeed I cannot recollect a single instance. Great numbers are bred in confinement in Holland. According to the following observation, taken from Girdlestone's 'Memoranda,' the nest of this Duck is rarely found:—'Garganey breed often in Norfolk; but as they deposit their eggs in the most inaccessible reed-beds, their nests are never discovered, although the young birds, yet unable to fly, are often seen. They usually appear on the broads in March, and those which do not intend to breed here depart about the end of April.'"

Referring to this passage, Mr. Alfred Newton writes to me:—"Since Mr. Girdlestone's time the nests have been often found. I have several eggs from Hoveton Broad, where it breeds annually, and I believe that a considerable number of birds of this species are always found among the 'flappers' which are shot in July."